

New Probe Is Sought In Ambush of Klan

for 4/8/70
Two organizations called yesterday for an independent government investigation into a report that the FBI and police in Meridian, Miss., lured Ku Klux Klan members into a fatal gunfight two years ago.

The American Civil Liberties Union and the American Friends Service Committee said the report, and their own investigation, indicated that the events leading to the June, 1968, shootout may have involved violations of federal law by both federal and state law enforcement officials.

The Justice Department declined comment on the request for an investigation and continued to refuse to discuss an account of the episode by the Los Angeles Times, which was published in The Washington Post Feb. 13-15.

The report said police and FBI agents, using money raised privately in Meridian's Jewish community, paid \$36,500 to two Klan informants to arrange a trap for two Klan terrorists suspected of bombings that had spread fear throughout the city.

A Klanswoman, Kathy Ainsworth, 26, was killed and a Klansman, Thomas A. Tarrant III, 21, was wounded in the gun battle that resulted when the trap was sprung outside the home of a potential bomb victim.

ACLU spokesmen said they were concerned about potential violations of federal civil rights laws—in this case Re-

construction Era Statutes forbidding infliction of summary executions—no matter who the victims were.

Spokesmen for the Friends committee said they were worried about the "climate" of effective law enforcement in areas where civil rights workers live and work.

Charles Morgan Jr. of the ACLU office in Atlanta told a press conference here that the investigation should not be conducted by the FBI but rather by the Civil rights Commission or an independent body established by President Nixon.